

SECOND PART
OF THE SECOND BOOK
OF THE
HISTORY OF LA FLORIDA,
BY THE INCA

Where will be seen the many and severe combats that Indians and Spaniards had in difficult passes in the great Province of Apalache; the hardships through which they passed in discovering the Sea; the events and the incredible fatigues that the thirty horsemen who went back for Pedro Calderón experienced in going and returning; the ferocity of the people of Apalache; the imprisonment of their cacique; his strange flight, and the fertility of that great province. It contains twenty-five chapters.

I

THE SPANIARDS REACH THE FAMOUS PROVINCE OF APALACHE, AND THE RESISTANCE OF ITS INDIANS

The governor and his captains having learned in the pueblo of Osachile that the province of Apalache was nearby—concerning which they had heard so many amazing and great things, both as to the abundance and fertility of the land and the deeds of arms and bravery of the people, with whose ferocity and valor the Indians had threatened them so often along the road, saying that those of Apalache would surely attack them with arrows, and quarter, burn and destroy them—desiring now to see it and to winter in it if it were so fertile as they said, were unwilling to stop in Osachile more than two days. At the end of that time they left the pueblo, and in the next three days they marched without any opposition through twelve leagues of uninhabited country that lies between the two provinces. At noon on the fourth day they came to a swamp that was very large and difficult to cross, because the water alone, without the woods that were on either side, was half a league wide and as long as a river. At the edges of the swamp beyond the water was a forest with a great deal of thick and tall timber and much underbrush consisting of blackberry vines and other small growth, which, being interwoven with the large trees, so thickened and closed up the forest that it had the appearance of a stout wall. Therefore there was no passage for crossing the woods and the swamp except by a path the Indians had made, so narrow that two men abreast could scarcely go along it.

Before reaching the forest, the camp was made on a fine plain, and because it was early the governor ordered that a hundred infantry, including crossbowmen, harquebusiers, and men armed with shields [rodeleros], and thirty cavalry, with twelve swimmers appointed to find out the depth of the water, should go to reconnoiter the crossing of the swamp. They were to take special note of the difficult places they found in it so that they might be prepared for them on the following day.

These Spaniards set out, and a few steps after they entered the path through the woods they found Indians ready to oppose their passage, but, since the path was so narrow, neither the faithful nor the infidels were able to fight, with the exception of the two leaders of each party. Therefore, placing two of the best-armed Spaniards in the lead with their swords and shields,

and two more crossbowmen and harquebusiers behind them, they drove the Indians before them all the way through the woods, until they came out on the water. There, since both parties could separate and scatter out, there was a lively combat with many and very good shots from one side to the other, and deaths and wounds on both sides.

Because of the strong resistance the Indians made in the water, the Christians were unable to ascertain just then how deep it was, and so reported to the general, who went in person to their assistance, taking with him the best infantry in the army. The enemy on their part also received reinforcements, making many more than they had formerly during the fight, with which they were strengthened, and the battle became more cruel and bloody. Both continued fighting in water halfway up their thighs, or waist-deep, moving with much difficulty because of the uneven ground caused by the undergrowth of blackberries and shrubs, and the fallen trees under the water. But with all these obstacles the Spaniards, knowing that they ought not to withdraw without having reconnoitered the crossing, made a great effort against the enemy and drove them to the other side of the water. They found that all of it could be forded waist- and thigh-deep except in midchannel, where for a distance of forty paces, because of the great depth, it was crossed by a bridge made of two fallen trees and other timbers fastened together. They saw also that under the water was a path just as there was through the woods, clear of the brush and vines that were on either side, off the path. Across the swamp on the other side, beyond the water, there was another forest as dense and thick as we have said was on this side, which also could not be traversed except along another narrow path or trail, made by hand. Each of these two forests and the swamp was half a league across, so that in all it was a league and a half.

Having examined the crossing well and considered the difficulties found in it, the governor returned with his men to his camp, to plan what must be done on the following day in accordance with what he had seen and learned. Having consulted with the captains regarding the inconvenience and dangers that the passage presented, he ordered a hundred cavalry made ready. These men being better armed than the infantry, they always suffered less injury from arrows. Taking shields and proceeding ahead on foot (because the horses were not needed), they protected a hundred more infantry, including crossbowmen and harquebusiers, who were to follow after them.

The governor also ordered that all of them be provided with axes, hatchets, and other tools with which to cut down a small tract of timber on the farther side of the swamp where the army could make camp, because the

Spaniards, having to cross one at a time, since the road was narrow, and having to dispute the pass with the enemy who had shown himself so fierce that day, it seemed to the governor impossible that his men could cross entirely in one day the two forests on the [sides of the] swamp. He therefore wished to prepare a camping place made thus laboriously in the second forest, for none was available otherwise.

II

THE SPANIARDS GAIN THE CROSSING OF THE SWAMP, AND THE MUCH AND BRAVE FIGHTING THAT TOOK PLACE THERE

With the preparations and orders that have been mentioned, each soldier carrying in his stomach the ration for that day, which was a little parched or boiled maize, and nothing else, two hundred Spaniards left the camp, from among the most chosen men there. Two hours before daylight they entered the path through the woods and proceeded along it as silently as possible until they came to the water where, finding the passage beneath it that was free of obstructions, they followed it to the bridge made of fallen trees and timbers fastened together, which was across the deepest part of the channel of the swamp. They crossed the bridge without a single Indian coming out to defend it, because they had thought the Spaniards would not dare enter at night into the thick woods and deep water with the undergrowth that was in it; therefore they had neglected to rise early in order to defend the crossing. But when daylight came and they perceived that the Christians had crossed the bridge, they gathered with furious shouts and clamor to defend the rest of the distance by water and swamp that was still to be passed, which was some quarter of a league. Angry at themselves for having been careless and slept so long, they charged upon the Castilians with great ferocity and violence. But the latter were well prepared, and being desirous that that fight should not last long, they pressed the Indians hard. Both were walking in water waist-deep. They drove them [the Indians] out of it, enclosing them in the passageway through the second forest, which was so close and thick that the Indians could not run through it in scattered formation, but only single file constrained by the narrow path. The Indians once enclosed in this path through the woods—since because of its narrowness few Spaniards were

needed to defend it—they agreed that 150 of them busy themselves in clearing a site for establishing the camp, and the other fifty guard and defend the pass in case the Indians should attempt to come and stop the work; because, since there was no other way of reaching those who were clearing the timber except by way of the path or trail, the few Christians who were there were sufficient to defend it.

They continued thus all that day, the Indians shouting and clamoring in order to alarm their enemies with their noise, now that they could not do so with arms; and some of the Castilians laboring to defend the passage, others in cutting the trees, and still others in burning those [trees] already cut so that they would not obstruct the site. When night came each one of our men stayed where he was, without sleeping any part of it because of the sudden assaults and the shouting of the Indians.

At daylight the army began to cross over, and although they had no opposition from the enemy, they had it from the road itself, which was very narrow, and from the obstructions in the water that prevented their passing as they would have liked to do; therefore they were forced to go one by one. Because of this excessive delay the whole camp was barely able to reach the clearing on the other side in the course of the day. There, because of the clamor and the sudden attacks the enemy made upon them, they slept as little that night as they had the night before. Those who were defending the crossing were given food by passing it from hand to hand, until it reached the ones in front.

As soon as day came the Spaniards marched along the path through the woods, driving the Indians before them, who continued to shoot arrows at them, retiring a little at a time, unwilling to yield to them anything that they could not win by the sword.

Thus they traversed the half-league through that dense and thick forest. Coming out of the thicket, they entered another woodland, clearer and more open, in which the Indians could scatter and go and come through the undergrowth. They harried the Castilians greatly, attacking from both sides of the road and discharging many arrows. They observed some order and plan, however, so that when those on one side were attacking, the others did not do so until the first had withdrawn, so as not to wound one another with stray arrows. The arrows were so numerous that they looked like a rain falling from the skies.

The forest where the Indians and the Spaniards were now fighting, which we said was more open, was not enough so to permit the horses to run through it. For this reason the Indians were going in and out among the

Christians so boldly that they paid no attention to them, and though the crossbowmen and harquebusiers made a stand against them, it had no effect, for while a Spaniard was firing one shot and making ready for another, an Indian would shoot six or seven arrows. They are so skillful and ready that they scarcely have discharged one before they have another in the bow.

The spots of clear ground between the trees by which the horses could pass, the Indians had surrounded and obstructed with large logs fastened to trees at either end in order to protect themselves against the horses; and in the thick woods through which the Indians could not travel they had made clearings at intervals with entrances and exits by which they could attack the Christians without being harmed by them.

They made these preparations ahead of time, because they knew that inasmuch as the woods and the swamp were so dense they would not be able to attack the Castilians as they desired and could do if the forest were more open and clearer, as was that in which they now were. Seeing, then, the advantages they had over the Spaniards because of the site, they did not cease attempting and carrying out whatever action, stratagem, or deceit they could against the Christians, eager to wound or kill them.

In these woods the Castilians were engaged in defending themselves from the enemy rather than in attacking him, because they could not make use of their horses, because of the obstruction of the woods; thus they were fatigued by their own courage rather than by their adversaries' arms. Seeing that their enemies were thus burdened, the Indians pressed them more and more on all sides, eager and anxious to rout and destroy them. Some of them took new courage and strength from the memory and recollection of having defeated and destroyed Pánphilo de Narváez ten or twelve years before in this same swamp, though not at this pass. They recalled this exploit to the Spaniards and to their general, saying to them, among other taunts and insults, that they would do the same thing to them and to him.

With these difficulties from the road and injuries from the enemy, the Spaniards traveled through the two leagues of forest until they emerged on open and level ground. Reaching it and giving thanks to God for having brought them out of that prison, they gave rein to their horses and showed well the anger they felt against the Indians, because in the more than two leagues of open country that intervened before they came to the maize fields they did not meet a single Indian whom they failed to capture or kill, especially those who made a show of resistance, not one of whom escaped. Thus they killed many Indians and took few prisoners, and the mortality of that day was large. With this these Castilians avenged the offense and injury the

Apalaches did to Pánphilo de Narváez, and undeceived them regarding their opinion of themselves and their boast that they would kill and destroy these Castilians as they had the others.

III

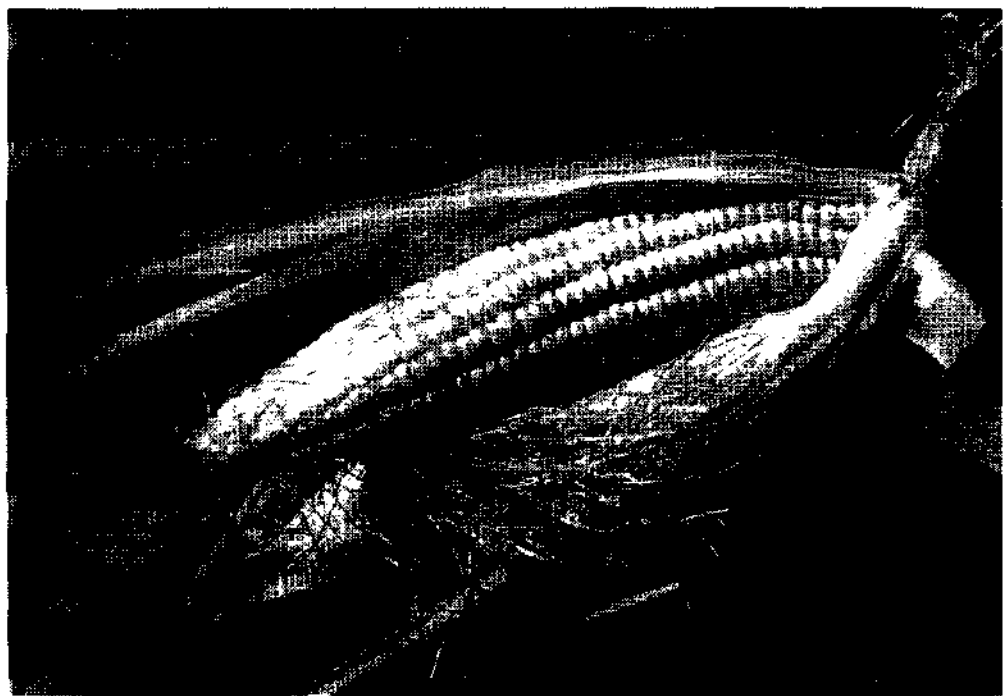
OF THE CONTINUOUS FIGHTING THAT TOOK PLACE UNTIL THE ARRIVAL AT THE CHIEF PUEBLO OF APALACHE

It seemed to Governor Hernando de Soto that they had done enough for that day in having got out of the forest where they had encountered such difficulties, and in having partially punished the Indians. Thus he did not wish to go farther but encamped his army on that plain, it being a place clear of timber. The camp was pitched near a small pueblo where the settlements and cultivated fields of the province of Apalache began, so renowned and famous throughout that country.

The Indians were unwilling to repose on the following night, nor did they allow the Christians to rest from the bad days and nights that they had given them after their arrival at the swamp. Throughout the night they never ceased their shouts, alarms, and sudden attacks at all hours, shooting many arrows into the camp. The whole night passed with this uneasiness on both sides, without their coming to blows.

When daylight came the Spaniards marched through some large fields of maize, beans, calabashes, and other vegetables, the fields on both sides of the road extending across the plain out of sight, and it was two leagues through them. Among the fields were scattered a large number of separate houses at a distance from one another and not in the form of a pueblo.¹⁰ The Indians came very hastily out of the houses and fields to shoot arrows at the Castilians, persisting in their desire and eagerness to kill or wound them. The latter, offended by such pertinacity and angered by the obstinacy and rancor they perceived in them, lost patience and speared them without mercy all through the maize fields, to see whether they could overcome or punish them by force of arms. But it was all in vain, because the anger and wrath

¹⁰Ordinary households among the early Apalache and many other Mississippian societies were dispersed across the landscape. These farmsteads, or household farming settlements, were tied to a nearby political center.



An Ear of Modern Corn. Corn was originally domesticated by the Native Americans, and it was the staple crop grown by the Mississippian cultures of the Southeast in De Soto's time. After landing in present Florida, De Soto's men did not see corn being grown until they reached the town of Paracoxi. Thereafter, when their food supplies brought from Cuba ran out, the Spaniards were forced to subsist mainly on corn taken from Indian stores. De Soto and Moscoso sought out well-populated places as they traveled, as much to ensure themselves of corn as to search for wealth. (Courtesy of the University of Alabama Museum of Natural History)

the Indians felt toward the Christians seemed to increase with the latter's desire for revenge.

Having passed over two leagues of cultivated fields, they came to a deep stream carrying much water and having thick timber on either side. It was a very difficult crossing, and the enemy had reconnoitered it well and prepared to attack the Castilians there. The latter seeing the obstacles and the defenses at the pass, the best-armed horsemen dismounted, and armed with swords and shields, and some with axes, they gained the pass and knocked down the palisades and barriers that had been built to prevent the horses from crossing, and their masters from attacking. The Indians charged here with greatest impetus and fury, placing their last hope of overcoming the Christians at this bad crossing because it was so difficult. Here the fighting was furious, and many Spaniards were wounded and some killed, because the enemy fought rashly, making the last stand of desperate men. But they could not succeed in their evil intent, for the Castilians won the victory through the spirit and strength that they showed and the great efforts that they made so that the injury might not be so great as they had feared to receive in such a dangerous place.

Leaving the stream, the Castilians marched two leagues more through a country without cultivated fields or settlements. The Indians did not oppose them there because in the field [*campo raso*] they could not stand against the horses. The Christians made camp in that place, which was clear of timber, so that the Indians with their fear of the horses, seeing them away from the woods, would allow them to sleep. After the past four days and three nights of watching and labor they were in need of rest. But that night they slept as little as before because the enemy, depending on the darkness, though in an open country, did not cease all night to give alarms and make sudden attacks on all sides of the camp. They disturbed the Castilians' rest so as not to lose the name and reputation the people of this province of Apalache had gained among all their neighbors and friends of being the bravest and most warlike.

On the next day, which was the fifth after they crossed the swamp, as soon as the army began to march the governor went ahead with two hundred cavalry and a hundred infantry, because he had learned from the Indian prisoners that two leagues from there was the pueblo of Apalache and in it its cacique with a large number of his bravest Indians, awaiting the Castilians to kill and quarter all of them. These words are precisely those that the prisoners said to the governor; although captives and in the power of their enemies they did not lose their bravado and their pride at being natives of Apalache.

The general and his men traveled the two leagues, spearing as many Indians as they met on either side of the road. They reached the pueblo and found that the curaca and his Indians had abandoned it. Knowing that they had not gone far, the Spaniards followed and traveled two leagues more on the other side of the pueblo, but though they killed and captured many Indians they could not come up with Capafi, for so the cacique was named. This is the first that we have found with a name different from his province. The adelantado returned to the pueblo, which consisted of 250 large and substantial houses, in which he found all his army lodged. He settled himself in those belonging to the cacique, which were on one side of the pueblo and, as the ruler's dwellings, were superior to all the others.

Besides this principal pueblo, there were many others throughout that district, half a league, one, one and a half, two, and three leagues away. Some had fifty or sixty houses, others a hundred or more, or less, not counting many other houses scattered about and not arranged in pueblos. The site of the whole province is pleasing, the soil fertile with a great abundance of food, and there are large quantities of fish, which the natives catch throughout the year for their subsistence and keep prepared for eating.

The governor and his captains and the officials of the real hacienda were all very pleased with what they saw of the good quality of that country and its fertility, and though all the provinces they had left behind them were good, this one had an advantage, inasmuch as its natives were indomitable and exceedingly bellicose, as has been seen and as we shall see later in some notable instances that occurred in this province between the Spaniards and Indians, individually and generally. To avoid prolixity, however, we shall not recount all of them, but from those that are told the ferocity of these Indians of Apalache will be seen clearly.

IV

THREE CAPTAINS GO TO DISCOVER THE BOUNDARIES OF APALACHE, AND THE REPORT THEY BRING

After the army had rested for several days and recovered somewhat from their recent great hardships, though during this time the constant alarms and sudden attacks of the enemy did not cease, night or day, the governor sent

bands of men on foot and on horseback with specially selected captains to penetrate fifteen or twenty leagues into the interior, to see and discover what might be on the boundaries and in the environs of that province.

Two captains went by different routes toward the north, one of them being Arias Tinoco and the other Andrés de Vasconcelos, who returned without anything of importance having happened to them, one eight days and the other nine after leaving the camp. They reported almost in the same words that they had found many pueblos having many people, and that the land abounded in food and was free of swamps and dense forests. Captain Juan de Añasco, who went toward the south, reported on the contrary that he had found a very rough and difficult country, almost impassable because of the obstacles he had encountered in the form of woods and swamps, which became worse as he proceeded south. On noting this difference between the very good and very poor country, I do not wish to go on without mentioning that Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca writes in his *Commentarios* concerning this province of Apalache. He describes it there as being rough, uneven, full of woods and swamps, with rivers and difficult passes, thinly populated and sterile, all of which is contrary to what we are writing. Therefore, with due regard for what that gentleman writes, for it is trustworthy, we understand that his journey was not so far into the interior as was that which Governor Hernando de Soto made, but was nearer the seacoast, and thus the land was found to be so rough and full of woods and bad swamps as he says. As we shall soon see, the same thing was found and discovered by Captain Juan de Añasco, who went from the chief pueblo of Apalache to find the sea, and he had great good luck in not losing himself time and again because of the bad country that he found. The pueblo that Cabeza de Vaca calls Apalache, to which he says Pánphilo de Narváez came, I believe was not this principal one that Hernando de Soto discovered, but another one of the many that are in this province that would be nearer the sea and, because of being in its jurisdiction, would be called Apalache like the province itself; for in the pueblo we have said was its capital there was found what we have seen. It is also to be noted that much of the account that Alvar Núñez wrote of that country is that which the Indians gave him, as he himself says. Those Castilians did not see it because, as they were few and most or all of them were captives, it was impossible for them to travel through it and see it with their own eyes, and even to seek food, and thus most of them were left to die of hunger. In the account that the Indians gave him it is to be believed that they would speak ill rather than well of their country, to discredit it so that

the Spaniards would lose their desire to go there, and thus our *History* does not contradict the account of that gentleman.

V

OF THE HARDSHIPS THAT JUAN DE AÑASCO EXPERIENCED IN DISCOVERING THE SEACOAST

We said that one of the captains who went to explore the region of Apalache was Juan de Añasco. So that the hardships he experienced may be better known, then, it must be said that he took forty cavalry and fifty foot soldiers, and there was also with him a gentleman named Gómez Arias, who was a relative of the governor's wife, a great soldier and very useful wherever he was because along with his military skill, great industry, and good counsel, he was a very expert swimmer (a useful and necessary thing for conquests), and overcame difficulties that arose in the water and on land. He had been a slave in Barbary where he learned the Moorish language, and he spoke it so well that he came out from the interior many leagues away on a Christian frontier without the Moors whom he happened to meet discovering that he was a slave. This gentleman and the men whom we have mentioned went with Juan de Añasco to the south to discover the sea, as they had news that it was less than thirty leagues from Apalache. They took an Indian to guide them who offered to do so, making a great show of loyalty and friendship toward the Christians.

In two days' journey of six leagues each, which they traveled over a very good road, wide and smooth, they came to a pueblo called Aute; they found it without people but full of food. On this road they passed two small rivers, easy to cross.

From the pueblo of Aute they went on with their search, taking food for four days. On the second day that they traveled by this same wide and good road, the Indian who was guiding them began to deceive them, it appearing to him that it was a bad thing to be a faithful guide to his enemies. Thereupon he led them out of the wide and good road that they had followed up to that time and set them among some thick and dense woods, very hard to travel through, with many fallen trees and without a road or path. Some

small plots of ground that they found, about the size of kitchen gardens, without timber, were themselves so miry that horses and foot soldiers sank into them. On top they were covered with grass and looked like solid ground on which one could walk safely. They found on this road—or in this forest, to speak correctly—a species of bramble with long and thick branches that extended over the ground and covered a large area. They had long straight thorns that hurt the horses and foot soldiers cruelly, and though they tried to guard against these vicious brambles, they could not, because there were a great many of them and they were spread between two layers of earth, covered with mud or sand, or with water. With these difficulties and others that can be imagined, these Castilians traveled off the road for five days, turning this way and that as the Indian wished to take them according to his whim, to deceive them or place them where they could not get out.

When the food that they took from the pueblo of Aute was exhausted, they decided to go back there to get more provisions and then continue their search. On turning back toward Aute, they suffered more hardships on the way than in going out, because they were forced to retrace their steps along the same route in order not to become lost; and, as they found the earth already trampled by their former passage, the horses and even the infantry sank in the mud more than when the trail was fresh.

In the midst of these fatigues and hardships the Castilians understood well enough that the Indian had lost the road purposely, because three times they found themselves in the midst of the woods so close to the sea that they could hear the surf. But as soon as he would hear it the Indian again would lead them into the interior, hoping to entrap them where they could not get out and would perish of hunger; and though he should die with them, he was satisfied if by so doing he could kill them. The Christians knew all this, but they did not dare confront him with it for fear of offending him more than he was already, and also because they had brought no other guide.

Having returned to Aute, where they arrived dying of hunger—as men who for four days had eaten nothing except herbs and roots—they took provisions for five or six days more, as there was a great abundance of them in the pueblo, and went back to their exploration, not by better roads than the past ones but by other, worse ones—if worse there could be, or if the diligence and malice of the guide could find them, as he desired to do.

One night when they were sleeping in the forest, the Indian, unable to put off longer the time of killing the Christians, seized a stick from the fire and struck and injured one of them in the face. The other soldiers wished to

kill him for his shamelessness and boldness, but the captain prevented it, saying that they must tolerate him because he was the guide and they had no other. They went back to rest, and an hour later he did the same thing to another Castilian. Then they gave him many blows, kicks, and cuffs by way of punishment, but this did not prevent the Indian's beating still another soldier with another firebrand before morning.

The Spaniards now did not know what to do with him. For the time being they contented themselves with beating him and putting him in chains, by which he was attached to one of their number so that he could keep special watch over him.

As soon as morning came they resumed their march, suffering much from the hardships of their past route and the present one, and angered by the bad behavior of the guide. After they had traveled a short distance the latter, seeing himself in the power of his enemies and being unable to kill them or to escape from them, despairing of his life, attacked the soldier to whom he was chained and, grasping him from behind, raised him up and threw him full length on the ground; and before he could get up he jumped on him with both feet and kicked him. The Castilians and their captain, unable to endure such outrages any longer, stabbed and speared him until they left him for dead. A strange thing was noted, however, and this was that the swords and spearheads entered into and cut his body so little that he seemed to be enchanted; the many gashes he received wounded him no more than blows from a wand made of shoots from the quince or wild olive tree. Angered by this, Juan de Añasco raised himself in the stirrups and, grasping his spear with both hands, struck him with all his strength; and though he was a strong and robust man, the spearhead did not go halfway in. When the Spaniards saw this they wondered at it, and they loosed a greyhound to finish killing him by grasping and tearing him. So ended this treacherous and malicious Indian, as he deserved.

VI

CAPTAIN JUAN DE AÑASCO REACHES THE BAY OF AUTE, AND WHAT HE FOUND THERE

The Castilians had not gone fifty paces from the Indian, whom they believed to be dead and eaten by the dog, when they heard the hound giving

great howls, clamoring as if they were killing him. Our men ran to see what it was and found that the Indian, with his little remaining strength, had placed his thumbs on either side of the dog's mouth and was tearing his jaws apart, the dog being unable to help himself. Seeing this, one of the Spaniards stabbed him repeatedly, finally killing him; and another cut off his hands with a hunter's cutlass that he carried, and after they were severed he could not loosen them from the dog's mouth, so desperately had he grasped it.

After this event the Spaniards resumed their march, marveling that a single Indian should have been the means of giving them so much trouble, but as they did not know in which direction to go, they were confused, uncertain what to do. In this dilemma they were helped by an Indian whom they had happened to take on their past route when they were returning to the pueblo of Aute, and they had kept him with them continuously. Though it is true that before the death of the Indian guide the Spaniards had questioned him many times as to whether he knew the route to the sea, he never answered a word, remaining silent because the other had threatened him with death if he talked. Seeing, then, that the obstacle was removed and that he was rid of his companion, and fearing that they might kill him as they had the other, he spoke and replied to what they were then asking him. By means of signs and a few words that he knew, he said that he would take them to the sea at the same place where Pánphilo de Narváez had built his boats and had embarked, but that it was necessary to go back to the pueblo of Aute because the direct route to the sea began there. Although the Spaniards told him that it must be nearby, because from where they were they could hear the sound of the waves and surf, he replied that they would never in their lives reach the sea by the way that they thought to go, and that the other Indian was taking them, because of the many swamps and the impassable woods that lay between; therefore they must return to the pueblo of Aute. Thereupon the Castilians returned to the pueblo, having spent five days on this second journey and ten on the first, at the cost of much personal hardship and with the loss of fifteen days, which was what they most regretted, because of the anxiety that the governor would feel at their delay.

Returning to the pueblo, then, Gómez Arias and Gonzalo Silvestre, who were going on ahead exploring the country, seized two Indians whom they found near the pueblo. Being questioned as to whether they knew how to guide them to the sea, they replied that they did and confirmed everything that the Indian whom they were bringing as a prisoner had told them. With these hopes the Spaniards rested that night somewhat more easily than on the fifteen nights past.

The next day the three Indians guided the Christians along a smooth, clear, and pleasant road between two large and good fields of stubble. Leaving them behind, the road became wider and more open, and they found no bad crossings throughout its length, except one narrow swamp that was easily passed, the horses sinking only to the pastern. Having marched a little more than two leagues, they reached a very wide and spacious bay, and, proceeding along its shore, they came to the site where Pánphilo de Narváez had camped. There they saw where he had the forge on which he made the nails for vessels; they found much charcoal around it. They saw also some thick beams hollowed like troughs, which had served as mangers for the horses.

The three Indians showed the Spaniards the site where the enemy had killed ten Christians of Narváez's party, as Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca also tells in his history. They took them step by step all along the route followed by Pánphilo de Narváez, pointing out the spots where such and such things had occurred. Finally, they omitted none of the notable things that Pánphilo de Narváez did on that bay, recounting them by signs and with words well or ill understood, some spoken in Spanish, for the Indians of all that coast pride themselves greatly on knowing the Spanish language and try diligently to learn a few odd words, which they repeat over and over.

Captain Juan de Añasco and his soldiers went about very carefully looking to see whether they might have placed some letters in hollow trees or cut some words on the bark that would tell some of the things that these others had seen and noted—because it has been a very usual and customary thing for the first discoverers of new lands to leave such messages for their successors, and these messages often have been of great importance—but they could find nothing of the sort for which they were looking.

After doing this, they followed the shore of the bay to the sea, which was three leagues away, and at ebb tide ten or twelve swimmers embarked in some old abandoned canoes they found, and sounded the depth of the bay in midchannel.

They found it deep enough for large ships. Then they put signs on the highest trees thereabout so that those who came coasting by sea could recognize that site, which was the same one where Pánphilo de Narváez embarked in his five vessels, so unfortunate that none of them survived.

Having taken the precautions described and set them down in writing so that those who might come to it should not miss the place, they returned to the camp and reported to the governor everything that had happened and what they had done. The general was much relieved to see them because he